

REMARKS

Claims 1-35 were pending and examined in this application. The Office action imposes a restriction of claims among the following claim groups:

- I. Claims 1-21;
- II. Claims 22-32; and
- III. Claims 33-35.

In response to the above restriction requirement, Applicants elect, with traverse, to prosecute Group I of claims 1-21. Applicants respectfully submit that while the different groups of claims can be classified in different classes, there is no further search that is needed to examine claim groups II and III. The inventive features recited in claim 22, for example, is similar to limitations recited in claim 3, which has already been examined in substance.

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

Both Forms PTO-1449 submitted through a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement dated May 23, 2003, and a Fourth Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement dated April 16, 2004 have not been returned. And Applicants hereby request such action by the Examiner as evidence that the submitted references have been duly considered by the Office. Copies of the Forms PTO-1449 at issue are enclosed under Exhibit A for the Examiner's convenience.

Summary

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the application and claims in light of the foregoing remarks, and respectfully submit that the claims are in

Appl. No. 09/977,971
Response to Restriction Requirement dated August 23, 2004
Reply to Office action of July 21, 2004

condition for allowance.

Date: August 23, 2004
Reg. No.: Limited Recognition
(see attached)

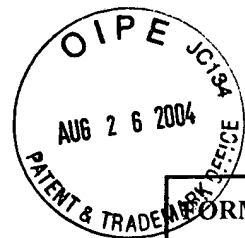
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Respectfully submitted,



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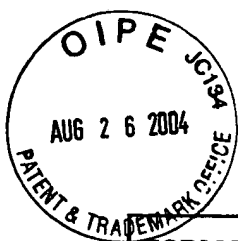


SHEET 1 OF 1

FORM PTO - 1449				ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.: NMT-002					
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT				APPLICANTS: Forde et al.					
				SERIAL NO.: 09/977,971					
				FILING DATE: October 17, 2001		GROUP: 3732			
U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS									
EXAM. INIT.		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUB CLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE		
	A5	430,849	6/24/1890	Groth					
	A6	5,049,153	9/17/91	Nakao et al.					
	A7	5,464,408	11/7/95	Due					
	A8	5,609,608	3/11/97	Benett et al.					
	A9	5,702,421	12/30/97	Schneidt					
	A10	5,810,864	9/22/98	Schaller					
	A11	5,853,420	12/29/98	Chevillon et al.					
	A12	5,891,130	4/6/99	Palermo et al.					
	A13	6,174,322	1/16/01	Schneidt					
	A14	6,238,415	5/29/01	Sepetka et al.					
FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS									
EXAM. INIT.		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY CODE	CLASS	SUB CLASS	FILING DATE	ABSTRACT ONLY	ENGLISH LANG (Y/N)
OTHER ART, JOURNAL ARTICLES, ETC.									
EXAM. INIT.	OTHER DOCUMENTS: (Including Author, Title, Date, Relevant Pages, Place of Publication)								
EXAMINER					DATE CONSIDERED				

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SHEET 1 OF 1

FORM PTO - 1449

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.: NMT-002

FOURTH SUPPLEMENTAL
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT

APPLICANTS: Forde et al.

SERIAL NO.: 09/977,971

COPY

FILING DATE: October 17, 2001

GROUP: 3732

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

EXAM. INIT.		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUB CLASS	FILING DATE IF APPROPRIATE
	A29	6,623,518 B2	9/23/03	Thompson et al.			
	A30	2002/0120323 A1	8/29/02	Thompson et al.			
	A31	2002/0120322 A1	8/29/02	Thompson et al.			
	A32	5,951,564	9/14/99	Schroder et al.			
	A33	5,702,421	12/31/97	Schneidt			
	A34	5,407,243	4/18/95	Riemann			
	A35	5,133,721	7/28/92	Angulo			

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

EXAM. INIT.		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY CODE	CLASS	SUB CLASS	FILING DATE	ABSTRACT ONLY	ENGLISH LANG (Y/N)
	B2	709 732	8/25/41	DE					
	B3	WO 02/032496 (PCT/US01/32184) with International Search Report	4/25/02	PCT					

OTHER ART, JOURNAL ARTICLES, ETC.

EXAM. INIT.	OTHER DOCUMENTS: (Including Author, Title, Date, Relevant Pages, Place of Publication)								
	C1	International Search Report for PCT/US03/07911 dated March 15, 2002.							

EXAMINER

DATE CONSIDERED

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